

Education, Children and Families Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 16 April 2024

Community Access to Schools – Transfer of Management of Non-sports Lets to Edinburgh Leisure

Executive/routine
Wards

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Education, Children and Families Committee:
 - 1.1.1 Notes the ongoing work to progress transfer of the management of non-sports lets to Edinburgh Leisure;
 - 1.1.2 Notes the level of access by community groups in the first 3 months of the pilot with 9 high schools;
 - 1.1.2 Agrees to receiving a further report in June 2024, to consider the level of access and the further rollout of management of non-sport lets by Edinburgh Leisure

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Report

Community Access to Schools – Transfer of Management of Non-sports Lets to Edinburgh Leisure

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 On 5 September 2023, Education Children and Families considered a report and agreed to a six-month pilot to transfer the management of non-sports lets to Edinburgh Leisure with 9 pilot schools
- 2.2 This report provides a mid-point update in the planned first six months of the pilot. It should be noted that the period from January to June is generally quieter than August to December, and that the first 3 months of the calendar year include the Christmas and February breaks.
- 2.3 This report asks Committee to agree to receiving a further report in June 2024, so that a full transfer to Edinburgh Leisure can be agreed ready for implementation in August 2024.

3. Background

- 3.1 Since 2017, Edinburgh Leisure has managed community access to secondary school sports facilities.
- 3.2 At its meeting on 3 March 2020, Education, Children and Families Committee approved (in principle) the extension of Edinburgh Leisure's remit to include the management of community access to non-sport spaces in secondary schools.
- 3.3 At its meeting on 5 September 2023, the Committee agreed to Edinburgh Leisure taking on the management of non-sports lets in 9 schools for a six-month pilot. At the end of the pilot the projected income would be supported by data from six months of business, and any risks mitigated/minimised.

4. Main report

- 4.1 Council Officers and Edinburgh Leisure meet regularly to ensure the project is delivered effectively and efficiently.
- 4.2 As planned, management of non-sports lets for 9 pilot schools began in January 2023, following a period of preparation, information gathering and putting

infrastructure in place. The preparation period also included communications with schools and lets holders, and the development of a Marketing Strategy.

- 2.3 The pilot was planned for the first 6 months of 2024, to ensure enough time to realistically assess the impact of change, to make any moderations to the process and systems, to implement effective marketing and to assess the actual income against predicted income.

Pilot update as of 1 March 2024

- 4.4 Ongoing actions to date are summarised as follows:
- 4.4.1 An appendix to the existing Memorandum of Understanding for Sports lets will be added to include non-sports lets
 - 4.4.2 Financial performance in January 2024 (first month of pilot) shows that bookings commenced 12 January, generating income of £3.5k, expenditure of £1.8k and a net income of £1.7k
 - 4.4.3 Income for February 2024 was £6.8k, expenditure of £1.6k and net income of £5.2k.
 - 4.4.4 Some historic arrangements with groups are being clarified and charges brought into line for consistency and clarity
 - 4.4.5 Marketing to specific targeted groups continues, making existing and potential let holders aware of general spaces and rehearsal rooms that can be available for let. Marketing is also making good use of social media platforms
 - 4.4.6 Meetings between Edinburgh Leisure and the Adult Education team have considered the respective roles and responsibilities to ensure adult learning lets can also be managed by Edinburgh Leisure.
 - 4.4.7 Lets cancellations can occur when schools have pre-planned events, where there is planned maintenance, or where an emergency closure is required. As the pilot progresses, consideration is being given to the most efficient ways to ensure short notice cancellations are minimised.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Council Officers will continue to work with Edinburgh Leisure to monitor the efficacy of communications and marketing, and the potential to increase business.
- 5.2 Financial income and expenditure will continue to be closely monitored
- 5.3 Council Officers and Edinburgh Leisure will continue to meet key stakeholders to ensure the six-month pilot gathers information and addresses any issues, using this to make recommendations for a phase 2 transfer of identified schools or a full transfer ready for August 2024.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The service has an income target of £370K for non-sports lets. Prior to the current pilot, with each school being responsible for the management of lets in non-sports spaces, the income in 2018/19 and 2019/20 was £264K and £285K respectively for all 23 secondary schools.
- 6.2 Income for January – March 2023 was £17K for 9 secondary schools and was predicted as unlikely to increase above this level of activity in 2023/24 resulting in a budget pressure of approximately £300K.
- 6.3 By the end of March 2024, the 6-month pilot is at midpoint. Income from the pilot schools during January and February 2024 is £10.4k, expenditure is £3.46k and net income is £6.9k.
- 6.4 The transfer of non-sport lets to Edinburgh Leisure is predicted to result in an increase of usage by communities and clubs and increase income to the Council. As reported in September 2023, estimated net income (including deduction of Edinburgh Leisure's management fee at 30% across all years) for phase one in year 1 (2024/25) would be £268K increasing to £386K in year 2 and £504k in year 3. This would reduce the existing budget pressure in year 1 and deliver the income target in years 2 and 3. Edinburgh Leisure keeps records of corporate resource required to support this service and the management fee will be reviewed on an annual basis.
- 6.5 If, following review and analysis of phase one in June 2024, all 23 secondary schools were transferred, Edinburgh Leisure's estimate for net income (before any corporate management fee) in year 1 would be £892k rising to £1.75m in year 3.

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

- 7.1 The transfer of the management of non-sport lets in secondary schools to Edinburgh Leisure will improve the consistency of access across the city. Facilitating access through an improved service will reduce the need for individuals and groups to travel beyond their locality to deliver activities and programmes.

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

- 8.1 Improving access to the secondary estate will be another step towards improving the efficiency of use of the Council's facility infrastructure. It is also a move towards ensuring more use of our newer buildings and reducing the size of the Council estate.
- 8.2 This, combined with the potential reduction in travel time and distance for groups and clubs, the transfer of service to Edinburgh Leisure could have a positive effect on net carbon emissions.

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

- 9.1 The previous report noted there could be a degree of risk around the additional infrastructure required by Edinburgh Leisure to deliver the service. Calculations were made on the projected income and in September there was no trading data to support these calculations.
- 9.2 The six-month pilot to transfer non-sports lets in 9 identified schools to Edinburgh Leisure began in January 2024. This means there is now income to support the projected income. While the period between the start of January and end of March 2024, includes part of the Christmas break and the February holiday, the income generated to date reduces the risk outlined in September 2023.
- 9.3 Officers at the Council and Edinburgh Leisure continue monitor the performance of the service closely and mitigate the risk by minimising the additional infrastructure until required.
- 9.4 At the end of the six-month pilot period (June 2024), there will be sufficient data about usage, income and benefits to assess the long term viability and potential for business growth.
- 9.5 No negative user or community feedback has been received to date. While the pilot of 9 schools is underway, there is a risk that operating a different (CEC) lets management system for non-sport lets in the other secondary schools is inconsistent and confusing for let holders. This will be reduced when there is a full transfer of non-sport lets to Edinburgh Leisure assuming the financial benefits are realised as projected.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 [EC&F Committee 5 September 2023, Transfer of non-sport lets to Edinburgh Leisure.](#)

11. Appendices

- 11.1 Appendix 1 Transfer Of Non-Sport Lets Review – End February 2024

Transfer Of Non-Sport Lets Review – End February 2024

Objective

This paper provides an update on the transfer of non-sporting lets to Edinburgh Leisure following two months of operations.

Summary of the project to date

For the nine high schools in scope, Edinburgh Leisure opened bookings for non-sport lets on 13th November 2023, for bookings taking place from 9th January 2024.

Edinburgh Leisure bookings team has also absorbed the administration of bookings for the Adult Education programme in these schools. Liaison meetings have been established with the programme management teams.

Key tasks were mapped and progressed, requiring support from various Edinburgh Leisure teams including marketing, finance, ICT, and health & safety throughout the project, as well as input from senior management.

School Audits

The Edinburgh Leisure Schools Manager visited the nine schools to introduce the project to each school's Business and Facilities Managers, agreeing the areas that could be accessible for community hire. The building plans provided by CEC facilitated creation of Health & Safety plans and documents, as well as customer journey plans.

Marketing/ Promotion

The Edinburgh Leisure marketing department created a phase 1 project plan which included a range of activities most notably including the introduction of a classroom hire webpage which was launched on EL's main website page from the 13th November. There is a link to this from the extended lets page on the CEC website.

A social media campaign to promote non-sporting lets spaces was ran during February, targeting the people interested in music and rehearsal spaces. The ads performed very well, reaching 43,200 people over the 2 weeks they ran. This resulted in 816 link clicks to the non - sporting lets webpage.

Our new Classroom Hire page has been active for four months, promoting non-sporting let facilities. Visitor numbers are low relative to other activities but have risen strongly in the last month.

Staffing Resource

Operational costs have been carefully managed to achieve maximum efficiency. With the exception of James Gillespie's High School, current bookings are being managed by existing staffing resource. Until demand is sufficiently scaled up, this is more cost effective than recruiting staff permanently.

Pricing

The 23/24 CEC fees and charges pricing has been applied where possible, however we note there are anomalies with certain bookings (e.g. a long-standing let at Balerno high school), where historical agreements on the duration of the booking charged and price level remain in place. An approach to consistently manage such situations is required prior to accepting bookings for the 24/25 booking period commencing in August.

Headline Analysis by School

Bookings went live from Monday 8th January with bookings in five of the nine schools.

January – Usage – 3975 – Net Profit - £1,761.80

February – Usage - 5266 - Net Profit - £5,175.80

APPENDIX 1

The table below shows the overall booking information in each school for both non-sport and bookings and the adult education programme. There is insufficient data to run a comparison on previous years.

Monthly Summary Of Non-Sport Lets						
January	Number of bookees	Number of areas booked	Monthly usage	Income	Costs	Profit/Loss
Balerno	2	17	985	£414.00	£0.00	£414.00
Broughton	2	25	240	£364.80	£0.00	£364.80
InCraigroyston	0	0	0	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Forresters	1	2	45	£15.20	£0.00	£15.20
willGracemount	0	0	0	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
JGHS	7	110	1935	£2,120.00	£349.00	£1,771.00
PHS	0	0	0	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
LA	3	61	770	£649.80	£0.00	£649.80
SA	0	0	0	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Booking Advisor					£1,453.00	
Totals	15	215	3975	£3,563.80	£1,802.00	£1,761.80

Adult Education Programme Bookings	
January	Number of areas booked
Balerno	0
Broughton	9
Craigroyston	1
Forresters	0
Gracemount	0
JGHS	6
PHS	0
LA	13
SA	0
	0
Totals	29

February	Number of bookees	Number of bookings per space	Monthly Usage	Income	Costs	Profit/Loss
Balerno	2	12	1276	£1,106.00	£0.00	£1,106.00
Broughton	3	26	595	£582.00	£0.00	£582.00
Craigroyston	1	1	25	£38.00	£0.00	£38.00
Forresters	1	8	180	£60.80	£0.00	£60.80
Gracemount	0	0	0	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
JGHS	8	135	2135	£2,380.00	£210.00	£2,170.00
PHS	0	0	0	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
LA	5	72	1055	£2,672.00	£0.00	£2,672.00
SA	0	0	0	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Booking Advisor				£0.00	£1,453.00	
Totals	20	254	5266	£6,838.80	£1,663.00	£5,175.80

February	Number of areas booked
Balerno	0
Broughton	15
Craigroyston	6
Forresters	0
Gracemount	0
JGHS	9
PHS	0
LA	46
SA	0
Totals	76

Total Profit £6,937.60